

Remarks

In the Office Action mailed December 14, 2004:

1. Claims 3, 4, 21, 28 and 33 were apparently rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 ¶ 2 as being indefinite;
2. Claims 1-19, 21-26 and 28-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,721,316 (Epps); and
3. Claims 20 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Epps.

I Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112 ¶ 2

Claims 3, 4, 21, 28 and 33 were amended to remove the term “large enough.”

II Epps (U.S. Patent No. 6,721,316)

Epps is directed to a Flexible Engine and Data Structure for Packet Header Processing (title).

A. Epps Does Not Include a Timer Unit

Claimed embodiments of the invention (e.g., claims 8, 13, 22) recite the use of a timer unit for managing timers. Different timers may be associated with different communication streams, their states, the control blocks used to process a packet or set of data, and so on. Timers may be used to retain or reflect the state of associated communication streams, or other events that have occurred or that may occur in the future. Timers may therefore be associated with events such as opening a new communication connection, closing an existing connection, activity on an existing connection, etc.

The Examiner cited column 31, lines 51-52 of Epps, and stated that “timer unit can be programmed to control packet flows within the system.” Applicants traverse. The cited portion of Epps simply states that “a programmable timer is started at the beginning of each pass through the queues.” The timer is apparently used to merely time the processing of all queues (column 31, lines 52-60).

Epps thus uses a single timer, and therefore does not require or include a timer unit that

“manage[s] a set of timers” as recited in, for example, claims 13 and 22.

The Examiner also cited item 1210 of FIG. 12 (the Queue Manager) and column 15, lines 51-52, which states that the queue manager provides control and coordination of the packet receive stage and the packet transmit stage. This does not teach *or* suggest Applicants’ timer unit, as it says nothing about using timers to perform the “control and coordination.” Also, the fact that Epps has a congestion avoidance scheme (Random Early Detection) teaches away from the use of Applicants’ timer unit, as RED looks at congestion levels, not timers (column 17, lines 19-24).

Thus, Epps’ timer cannot anticipate Applicants’ timer unit.

III Selected Claims

A. **Claims 1-11**

Claim 1 was amended to incorporate the subject matter of claims 8 and 9, which were cancelled without prejudice. As described above in Section II, Epps does not teach the use of a timer unit for managing multiple timers.

Claim 1 was also amended to make it clearer that, in this embodiment of the invention, the modification unit is configured to perform *both* the extraction of inbound data *and* the generation of an outbound communication. In Epps, this requires two components: receive FIFO 215 and pipeline switch 220 (page 4 of the office action, lines 3-8).

B. **Claims 12-21**

Claim 12 was amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 13, which was cancelled. As described above in Section II, Epps does not teach the use of a timer unit for managing multiple timers.

C. **Claims 22-28**

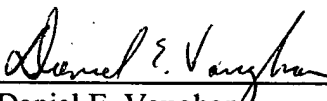
Claim 22 recites a timer unit for managing a set of timers. As described above in Section II, Epps does not teach the use of a timer unit for managing multiple timers.

CONCLUSION

No new matter has been added with the preceding amendments. It is submitted that the application is in suitable condition for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested. If prosecution of this application may be facilitated through a telephone interview, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's attorney identified below.

Respectfully submitted,

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